



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

**KINETICS, MODELLING AND SCALING-UP OF KOJIC ACID
FERMENTATION BY ASPERGILLUS FLAVUS 44-1
USING DIFFERENT CARBON SOURCES**

ROSFARIZAN MOHAMAD

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By

ROSFARIZAN MOHAMAD

**Thesis Submitted in Fulfilment of the Requirement for the Degree of Doctor of
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Universiti Putra Malaysia**

December 2000



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fulfilment of the requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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December 2000

Chairman : Assoc. Prof. Dr. Arbakariya Ariff

Faculty : Food Science and Biotechnology

Kojic acid production by *Aspergillus flavus* strain 44-1 using different types of carbon source (glucose, starch hydrolysate from enzymatic hydrolysis of sago starch, sucrose, fructose and gelatinized sago starch) was carried out in 250 mL shake flask, 2 L, 8 L and 50 L stirred tank fermenters. The experimental data from batch fermentation and resuspended cell system were analysed in order to form the basis for a kinetic model of the process. Unstructured model based on logistic and Luedeking-Piret equations was found suitable to describe growth, substrate consumption and kojic acid production by *Aspergillus flavus* in batch and also resuspended cell system using either glucose or sucrose. From the modelling, it was found that kojic acid production by *A. flavus* was non-growth associated process. The kinetic parameter values for each fermenter were calculated from the modelling

and they can be used to verify the experimental data using various types and concentration of carbon source.

Kojic acid production (23.5 g/L) using 100 g/L sago starch in a shake flask was comparable to fermentation of glucose (32.5 g/L) and starch hydrolysate (27.9 g/L) but in the 8 L and 50 L fermenter kojic acid production was greatly reduced due to non-optimal aeration conditions. Fed-batch fermentation with intermittent feeding of concentrated sago starch (140 g/L) can be employed to improve direct fermentation of sago starch to kojic acid by about 4 times higher as compared to batch fermentation. *A. flavus* was also capable to utilise sucrose for kojic acid fermentation where the highest production (40.23 g/L) in 2 L fermenter was obtained at 150 g/L sucrose. Kojic acid production (10.25 g/L) was greatly reduced in fermentation using fructose as the sole carbon source. Scaling-up based on a constant impeller tip speed (1.65 m/s) together with optimal DOT and pH control strategies was successfully used for kojic acid fermentation in 50 L fermenter using glucose and sucrose as carbon sources.

Kojic acid fermentation by *A. flavus* can be divided into two phases; growth and production phase. The culture pH during growth phase influenced the performance of kojic acid fermentation to a further extend than did the pH during the production phase. The fermentation without pH controlled (started with an initial culture pH 3) showed higher kojic acid production than single-phase pH controlled fermentation at a range of pH 2.2 – 4.0. Comparable kojic acid production to fermentation without pH controlled was obtained in two-phase pH

controlled fermentation (started with initial culture pH, without control during growth phase and switched to 3 during production phase).

Efficient conversion of glucose to kojic acid was achieved in a resuspended cell system, in a solution containing only glucose with citrate buffer at pH 3.5 and 30°C. The rate of glucose conversion to kojic acid was increased with increasing glucose concentration up to 100 g/L, suggesting that the biotransformation of glucose to kojic acid by the cell-bound enzymes followed the Michaelis-Menten enzyme kinetic models. The value of K_m and V_{max} for the reaction, as determined by using Langmuir plot, was 10.042 g/L glucose and 0.076 g/L.h, respectively.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk bergraduasi Ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**KINETIK, PERMODELAN DAN PENINGKATAN SKALA FERMENTASI
ASID KOJIK OLEH *ASPERGILLUS FLAVUS* 44-1 MENGGUNAKAN
SUMBER-SUMBER KARBON YANG BERBEZA**

oleh

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Penghasilan asid kojik oleh *Aspergillus flavus* strain 44-1 menggunakan pelbagai sumber karbon (glukosa, hidrolisat kanji daripada hidrolisis berenzim kanji sagu, sukrosa, fruktosa dan kanji sagu) telah dijalankan menggunakan kelalang bergoncang 250 mL dan pelbagai saiz fermenter berpengaduk (2 L, 8 L dan 50 L). Data-data eksperimen daripada proses fermentasi sesekelompok dan sistem sel terampai telah dianalisa untuk membentuk asas bagi model proses kinetik. Model tidak berstruktur berdasarkan persamaan-persamaan logistik dan Luedeking-Piret didapati sesuai untuk menerangkan pertumbuhan *Aspergillus flavus*, penggunaan substrat dan penghasilan asid kojik dalam sistem sesekelompok dan sel terampai menggunakan glukosa ataupun sukrosa. Daripada permodelan, penghasilan asid

kojik oleh *A. flavus* telah ditunjukkan sebagai proses pertumbuhan tidak berkait. Nilai-nilai parameter kinetik bagi setiap proses fermentasi telah dikira daripada permodelan dan ianya boleh digunakan untuk menguji benar tidaknya data eksperimen menggunakan pelbagai jenis dan kepekatan sumber-sumber karbon.

Penghasilan asid kojik (23.5 g/L) menggunakan 100 g/L kanji sagu di dalam kelalang bergoncang adalah setara dengan fermentasi menggunakan glukosa (32.5 g/L) dan hidrolisat kanji (27.9 g/L) tetapi di dalam fermenter 8 dan 50 L, penghasilan telah berkurang kerana keadaan pengudaraan yang tidak optima. Fermentasi suapan sesekelompok dengan penambahan bersela kanji sagu pekat (140 g/L) boleh digunakan untuk meningkatkan prestasi fermentasi asid kojik menggunakan kanji sagu sebanyak empat kali ganda lebih tinggi berbanding dengan fermentasi sesekelompok. *A. flavus* juga berupaya menggunakan sukrosa bagi fermentasi asid kojik di mana penghasilan tertinggi (40.23 g/L) di dalam fermenter 2 L diperolehi pada kepekatan sukrosa 150 g/L. Penghasilan asid kojik (10.25 g/L) menurun dengan banyaknya bagi fermentasi menggunakan fruktosa sebagai sumber karbon. Peningkatan skala berdasarkan halaju hujung pengaduk yang tetap (1.65 m/s) bersama-sama strategi kawalan kepekatan oksigen terlarut dan pH yang optima telah berjaya digunakan untuk fermentasi asid kojik dalam 50 L fermenter menggunakan glukosa dan sukrosa sebagai sumber karbon.

Fermentasi asid kojik boleh dibahagikan kepada dua fasa, fasa pertumbuhan dan fasa penghasilan. pH kultur semasa fasa pertumbuhan lebih banyak mempengaruhi proses fermentasi asid kojik berbanding pH semasa fasa

penghasilan. Fermentasi tanpa kawalan pH (dimulakan dengan pH 3) menunjukkan penghasilan asid kojik yang lebih tinggi berbanding fermentasi kawalan pH satu fasa pada julat pH 2.2 – 4.0. Penghasilan asid kojik yang setara dengan fermentasi tanpa kawalan pH telah diperolehi bagi fermentasi kawalan pH dua-fasa (dimulakan dengan pH 3, tanpa kawalan pH semasa fasa pertumbuhan dan ditukarkan kepada pH 3 semasa fasa penghasilan).

Penukaran glukosa kepada asid kojik yang berkesan telah diperolehi dalam sistem sel terampai, dalam larutan mengandungi hanya glukosa dengan penimbil sitrat pada pH 3.0 dan suhu 30°C. Kadar pertukaran glukosa kepada asid kojik adalah meningkat dengan peningkatan kepekatan glukosa sehingga 100 g/L, menunjukkan yang proses biotransformasi ini mengikuti model enzim kinetik Michaelis-Menten. Untuk tindakbalas ini, nilai K_m adalah 10.042 g/L glukosa dan nilai V_{max} adalah 0.076 g/L.j, seperti yang ditentukan menggunakan plot Langmuir.

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I certify that an Examination Committee met on 11 December 2000 to conduct the final examination of Rosfarizan Mohamad on her Doctor of Philosophy thesis entitled "Kinetics, Modelling and Scaling-up of Kojic Acid Fermentation by *Aspergillus flavus* 44-1 using Different Carbon Sources" in accordance with Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Act 1980 and Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Regulations 1981. The committee recommends that the candidate be awarded the relevant degree. Members of the examination Committee are as follows:

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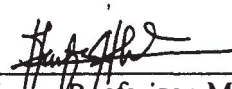
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DECLARATION FORM

I hereby declare that the thesis is based on my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously or currently submitted for any other degree at UPM or other institutions.


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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT.....	ii
ABSTRAK.....	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	viii
APPROVAL SHEETS.....	x
DECLARATION FORM.....	xii
LIST OF TABLES.....	xvii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	xx
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	xxiv
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
2 LITERATURE REVIEW.....	9
2.1 Properties and Application of Kojic Acid.....	9
2.2 Kojic acid-Producing Microorganism.....	15
2.3 Biosynthesis Pathway of Kojic Acid.....	17
2.4 Development of Kojic Acid Fermentation.....	21
2.4.1 Screening and Strain Improvement.....	21
2.4.2 Optimisation of Medium Composition.....	23
2.4.3 Optimisation of Culture Condition.....	34
2.4.4 Fermentation Techniques.....	40
2.4.5 Scaling up Procedure.....	59
2.4.6 Purification of Kojic Acid.....	63
2.5 Concluding Remarks.....	65
3 GENERAL MATERIALS AND METHODS.....	67
3.1 The Microorganism.....	67
3.2 Inoculum Preparation.....	68
3.3 Medium Composition.....	69
3.4 Experimental Plan.....	70
3.5 Fermenter.....	73
3.6 Sterilisation of Fermenter.....	80



3.7	Analytical Procedures.....	80
3.7.1	Kojic Acid and Other Organic acids Determinations.....	80
3.7.2	Glucose and Other Reducing Sugars Analysis.....	82
3.7.3	Dry Cell Weight Measurement.....	84
3.7.4	Intracellular Enzyme Assays.....	85
3.7.5	Extracellular Enzyme Assays.....	85
4	KINETICS AND MODELLING OF KOJIC ACID FERMENTATION.....	94
4.1	Introduction.....	94
4.2	Materials and Methods.....	96
4.2.1	Microorganism and Medium.....	96
4.2.2	Fermentations.....	97
4.2.3	Analytical Methods.....	97
4.2.4	Development of Mathematical Model.....	98
4.2.5	Mathematical Method.....	107
4.3	Results and Discussion.....	108
4.3.1	Batch Fermentation of Kojic Acid.....	108
4.3.2	Testing of the Fermentation Models.....	109
4.4	Conclusion.....	114
5	INFLUENCE OF pH ON KOJIC ACID FERMENTATION USING GLUCOSE AS A CARBON SOURCE.....	116
5.1	Introduction.....	116
5.2	Materials and Methods.....	117
5.2.1	Microorganism and Medium.....	117
5.2.2	Submerged Fermentation and Resuspended Cell System in Shake Flasks.....	118
5.2.3	Fermentation in a 2 L Stirred Tank Fermenter.....	118
5.2.4	Analytical Methods.....	119
5.3	Results and Discussion.....	120
5.3.1	Effect of Initial pH on Kojic Acid Production in Submerged Fermentation.....	120
5.3.2	Effect of pH on Kojic Acid Production in Resuspended Cell System.....	126
5.3.3	Enzymes Involved in Kojic Acid Production.....	129
5.3.4	Effect of pH on Kojic Acid Production in 2 L Fermenter.....	131
5.4	Conclusion.....	133

6	KOJIC ACID FERMENTATION BY USING SAGO STARCH AND STARCH HYDROLYSATE AS CARBON SOURCE.....	136
6.1	Introduction.....	136
6.2	Materials and Methods.....	138
6.2.1	Microorganism and Inoculum Preparation.....	138
6.2.2	Medium.....	138
6.2.3	Fermentations.....	139
6.2.4	Analytical Methods.....	142
6.3	Results and Discussion.....	143
6.3.1	Batch Kojic Acid Fermentation in a Shake Flask.....	143
6.3.2	Batch Kojic Acid Fermentation in 50 L Stirred Tank Fermenter.....	147
6.3.3	Kojic Acid Fermentation in 8 L Stirred Tank Fermenter.....	152
6.4	Conclusion.....	166
7	KINETICS OF KOJIC ACID FERMENTATION USING SUCROSE AS CARBON SOURCE	168
7.1	Introduction.....	168
7.2	Materials and Methods.....	170
7.2.1	Microorganism, Medium and Fermentation....	170
7.2.2	Analytical Methods.....	171
7.2.3	Mathematical Method.....	171
7.3	Results and Discussion.....	171
7.3.1	Batch Fermentation in a Shake Flask.....	171
7.3.2	Batch Fermentation in a 2 L Stirred Tank Fermenter.....	176
7.4	Conclusion.....	187
8	BIOTRANSFORMATION OF VARIOUS CARBON SOURCES TO KOJIC ACID BY CELL-BOUND ENZYMES OF <i>A. FLAVUS</i>	189
8.1	Introduction.....	190
8.2	Materials and Methods.....	190
8.2.1	Microorganism and Medium.....	190
8.2.2	Biotransformation Experiment.....	191
8.2.3	Disruption of Mycelia and Partial Purification of Enzymes Relevant to Kojic Acid Synthesis.....	192
8.2.4	Kinetics and Modelling of the Biotransformation Process.....	192
8.2.5	Analytical Methods.....	193
8.3	Results and Discussion.....	193
8.3.1	Effect of Different Carbon Sources.....	193
8.3.2	Effect of Different Cell Concentrations.....	197

	8.3.3	Effect of Sucrose Concentration.....	201
	8.3.4	Effect of Different Glucose Concentrations....	205
	8.3.5	Biotransformation using Mycelia and Partially Purified Enzymes.....	210
	8.4	Conclusion.....	211
9		IDENTIFICATION OF IMPORTANT PARAMETERS FOR SCALING UP OF KOJIC ACID FERMENTATION.....	212
	9.1	Introduction.....	212
	9.2	Materials and Methods.....	213
	9.2.1	Microorganism, Medium and Fermentation....	209
	9.2.2	Analytical Methods.....	209
	9.3	Results and Discussion.....	211
	9.3.1	Effect of Different Impeller Tip Speeds.....	214
	9.3.2	Effect of pH Control Strategy.....	216
	9.3.3	Effect of Different Carbon Sources	218
	9.4	Conclusion.....	220
10		GENERAL DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTHER WORK.....	223
		BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	234
		APPENDICS.....	247
		BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH	252

LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
1	Applications of kojic acid.....	14
2	Kojic acid-producing microorganisms.....	16
3	Carbon sources for kojic acid production by various types of microorganism.....	26
4	Nitrogen sources for kojic acid production by various types of microorganisms.....	29
5	Optimum culture pH for kojic acid production by various types of microorganisms.....	37
6	Optimum temperature for kojic acid fermentation by various microorganisms.....	38
7	Kojic acid production using different fermentation techniques by various kojic acid-producing microorganisms.....	58
8	Various parameters on scale up using geometric similarity.....	62
9	Properties and price of commercial kojic acid produced by several companies.....	64
10	Optimised medium for kojic acid production by <i>A. flavus</i>	70
11	Comparison of the performance and the kinetic parameters values of kojic acid production in batch culture by <i>A. flavus</i> Link using a shake flask and fermenter	114
12	Effect of initial culture pH on batch submerged fermentation of kojic acid by <i>A. flavus</i> using shake flask culture.....	123
13	Kojic acid and several organic acids production in batch submerged fermentation of <i>A. flavus</i> at 216h and 360h fermentation.....	124
14	Comparison of the performance of kojic acid fermentation by <i>A. flavus</i> carried out at different culture pH using 2 L fermenter.....	134

15	Comparison of the performance of kojic acid fermentation by <i>A. flavus</i> in shake flasks and 50 L fermenter using different types of carbon sources.....	151
16	The performance of batch and fed-batch fermentation of kojic acid fermentation by <i>A. flavus</i> with different pH control strategies using gelatinised sago starch as carbon source.....	167
17	Comparison of the performance and the kinetic parameter values of kojic acid production in batch culture by <i>A. flavus</i> using different types of sugar.....	175
18	Comparison of performance and kinetic parameter values of kojic acid production in batch fermentation by <i>A. flavus</i> using different concentrations of sucrose in 2 L stirred tank fermenter, including data for fermentation using fructose alone as comparison.....	181
19	Comparison of performance and kinetic parameter values of batch kojic acid fermentation of <i>A. flavus</i> with and without pH control using 2 L stirred tank fermenter.....	186
20	Comparison of the performance and the kinetic parameter values of the biotransformation of various carbon sources to kojic acid by cell-bound enzymes of <i>A. flavus</i>	197
21	Comparison of the performance and the kinetic parameter values of the biotransformation of glucose to kojic acid using different cell concentrations of <i>A. flavus</i>	201
22	Comparison of the performance and the kinetic parameter values of kojic acid production during biotransformation using different sucrose concentrations by cell mycelia of <i>A. flavus</i>	205
23	Comparison of the performance and the kinetic parameter values of kojic acid production during biotransformation using different glucose concentrations by cell mycelia of <i>A. flavus</i>	210
24	Comparison of the performance of kojic acid production in batch fermentation using different impeller tip speeds and pH control strategies in a 50 L fermenter.....	217
25	The overall comparison and performance of kojic acid fermentation in various scales of fermentation using different carbon sources by <i>A. flavus</i>	221

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
1	The chemical structure of kojic acid.....	10
2	Biosynthetic pathway of kojic acid in <i>A. flavus</i>	20
3	Effect of C/N ratio on the performance of kojic acid fermentation as reported by various investigators.....	31
4	A typical time course of batch kojic acid fermentation by <i>A. flavus</i>	45
5	Effect of dilution rate on product concentration at steady state and productivity of continuous fermentation for growth associated and non-growth associated process.....	48
6	Schematic diagram of the membrane surface liquid culture system using a cylindrical membrane module.....	53
7	Spores of <i>A. flavus</i> 44-1 on plate.....	68
8	Flow diagram of the experimental work.....	72
9	2 L stirred tank fermenter.....	74
10	8 L stirred tank fermenter.....	75
11	50 L stirred tank fermenter.....	76
12	Schematic diagram, dimensions and operating variables for three different sizes of stirred used in this study	79
13	A standard curve of kojic acid concentration using colorimetry method.....	82
14	A standard curve for enzymatic glucose determination using Glucose Sigma Trinder reagent.....	84
15	A standard curve of protein concentration.....	86
16	A standard curve of maltose concentration.....	91
17	Diagrammatic representation of a fermentation process for a single vessel.....	99

18	The fitness of the experimental data for growth of <i>A. flavus</i> to Logistic and Monod growth models.....	106
19	Comparison of calculated and experimental data for batch fermentation of kojic acid using a shake flask.....	112
20	Comparison of calculated and experimental data for batch fermentation of kojic acid using the fermenter.....	113
21	Effect of initial pH on kojic acid production by <i>A. flavus</i> in batch submerged fermentation using shake flasks culture.....	125
22	Effect of pH on kojic acid production in resuspended cell system.....	127
23	Effect of initial culture pH on the production of <i>A. flavus</i> biomass for subsequent used in resuspended mycelial system of kojic acid production at of pH 3.....	128
24	Activity of enzymes involved in kojic acid production during growth of <i>A. flavus</i> in batch submerged fermentation at initial pH 3.....	130
25	Effect of pH on kojic acid fermentation by <i>A. flavus</i> in batch submerged fermentation using 2 L fermenter.....	135
26	Batch kojic acid fermentation by <i>A. flavus</i> in a shake flask using starch hydrolysate (A); glucose (B); 100 g/L sago starch (C) and 50 g/L sago starch (D).....	146
27	Batch kojic acid fermentation by <i>A. flavus</i> in a 50 L fermenter using starch hydrolysate (A); glucose (B); 100 g/L sago starch (C); 50 g/L sago starch (D).....	150
28	A time course of batch kojic acid fermentation using sago starch as a carbon source in 8 L fermenter.....	154
29	A time course of fed-batch kojic acid fermentation using sago starch as a carbon source where sago starch was added at 48 h of fermentation in 8 L fermenter.....	158
30	A time course of fed-batch kojic acid fermentation using sago starch as carbon source where sago starch was added at 48 h interval in 8 L fermenter.....	159

31	Effect of pH control strategy on the performance of intermittent fed-batch fermentation of kojic acid.....	164
32	Effect of pH on the activity of <i>A. flavus</i> α -amylase.....	165
33	Kojic acid production by <i>A. flavus</i> in shake flask fermentation using various sugars, including the fitness of the calculated to the experimental data.....	174
34	Batch kojic acid fermentation by <i>A. flavus</i> in 2 L stirred tank fermenter using different concentrations of sucrose, which also includes the comparison between the calculated and experimental data.....	180
35	The pH-controlled batch kojic acid fermentation by <i>A. flavus</i> , which also includes the comparison between the calculated and experimental data.....	185
36	Biotransformation of various carbon sources to kojic acid by cell-bound enzymes of <i>A. flavus</i>	196
37	Effect of different cell concentration on kojic acid production and glucose consumption during biotransformation process, which also includes comparison of calculated and experimental data.....	200
38	Effect of sucrose concentration on kojic acid production by <i>A. flavus</i>	203
39	Determination of K_m and V_{max} values for the biotransformation of sucrose to kojic acid by biomass of <i>A. flavus</i> using Lineweaver-Burk and Langmuir plots.....	204
40	Effect of glucose concentration on kojic acid production by <i>A. flavus</i>	208
41	Determination of K_m and V_{max} values for the biotransformation of glucose to kojic acid by biomass of <i>A. flavus</i> using Lineweaver-Burk and Langmuir plots.....	209
42	The time course of kojic acid fermentation operated at different impeller tip speeds using glucose as a carbon source in a 50 L fermenter.....	219
43	The time course of kojic acid fermentation with and without pH control in 50 L fermenter.....	220

44	Improvement in kojic acid fermentation by <i>A. flavus</i> using glucose as a carbon source through the various approaches.....	224
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

α	Growth-associated rate constant for glucose consumption (g glucose/g cell)
β	Non-growth-associated rate constant for glucose consumption (g glucose/g cell.h)
C/N	Carbon to nitrogen ratio of medium in mM basis
D	Dilution rate
D_i	Impeller diameter
DOT	Dissolved oxygen tension
μ_{max}	Maximum or initial specific growth rate (h^{-1})
m	Growth associated rate constant for kojic acid production (g kojic acid/g cell)
n	Non-growth associated rate constant for kojic acid production (g kojic acid/g cell.h)
P_o	Initial kojic acid concentration (g/L)
P	Kojic acid concentration (g/L)
P_{max}	Maximum kojic acid concentration (g/L)
S_o	Initial substrate concentration (g/L)
S	Substrate concentration (g/L)
t	Time (h)
X	Cell concentration (g/L)
X_o	Initial cell concentration (g/L)
X_{max}	Maximum cell concentration (g/L)
$Y_{p/s}$	Yield of kojic acid based on glucose consumed (g/g)